

TRANSFER OF THE UNITED STATES WEATHER BUREAU SITE AND BUILDINGS AT EAST LANSING, MICH.

FEBRUARY 6, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the
state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. HAUGEN, from the Committee on Agriculture, submitted the
following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 12086]

The Committee on Agriculture, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 12086) to authorize the transfer of the United States Weather Bureau site and buildings at East Lansing, Mich., to the State of Michigan in exchange for another Weather Bureau site on the grounds of the Michigan State Board of Agriculture, and other considerations, having considered the same, report thereon with a recommendation that it do pass.

The Weather Bureau of the Department of Agriculture owns and occupies as its offices and living quarters for its observer at East Lansing, Mich., adjoining and formerly a part of the Michigan Agricultural College, a building consisting of seven rooms, providing an office space of 782 square feet and a storage space of 363 square feet.

The ground on which this building was erected was conveyed to the Government by deed dated December 5, 1908, by the State Board of Agriculture of the State of Michigan.

The present Weather Bureau building was constructed on this site in 1910, at a total cost of \$12,792.39. This expenditure was incurred under a provision of the 1909 appropriation act for the United States Department of Agriculture (35 Stat. 253), reading as follows:

* * * for the acquisition of sites and the erection of buildings for the use of the Weather Bureau and for all necessary labor, materials, and expenses, plans and specifications to be prepared by the Secretary of Agriculture, and the work done under the supervision of the Chief of the Weather Bureau, not to exceed \$105,000.

Occupancy of the building began on May 1, 1910.

In 1924 the Secretary of Agriculture, at the request of the Michigan State highway department and the State Board of Agriculture of

the State of Michigan, gave authority, under section 17 of the Federal highway act (42 Stat. 212), for the appropriation and transfer to the State highway department of a strip of land on the north side of the Weather Bureau reservation, in order to make possible the completion of Michigan Federal aid project No. 88 C 2, being the projection of a highway boulevard along the entire front of the campus of the Michigan Agricultural College and the Weather Bureau reservation. In consideration of this permit the State highway department has agreed, without expense to the Federal Government, to excavate and construct on another portion of the present Weather Bureau reservation a cellar and foundation walls, and to move and relocate and reestablish thereon, in as good condition as it now is, the present Weather Bureau building, turning the building at an angle of approximately 90°, so that the present office or west entrance will face north and the present north or residence entrance will face east on the proposed new boulevard entrance to the campus of the Michigan Agricultural College. It also agreed that without expense to the Federal Government necessary approaches and walks will be constructed and there will be made available by proper grading and landscaping sufficient surrounding or near-by space to the west and south of the present Weather Bureau property to be utilized for necessary and proper exposure of meteorological instruments of said bureau. Details of this agreement are set forth in letter from the Michigan State highway department, under date of July 22, 1924, and letter under date of August 6, 1924, from the Secretary of Agriculture to the State highway department of Michigan, copies attached.

Now and for some time past it has been recognized and represented by the officials of the Michigan Agricultural College and by Congressman Grant M. Hudson, of Michigan, as well as the State highway department, that it will cost the State highway department from twelve to fifteen thousand dollars to make the extensive alterations, repairs, and reconstruction necessary to carry out this agreement above noted; further, that the Weather Bureau building, if and when so moved and relocated, will not be entirely appropriate and satisfactory for the uses required of it by the Weather Bureau, on account of its proximity to the main boulevard thoroughfare along one side and the nearness to the new main boulevard entrance to the Michigan Agricultural College, which is being projected and constructed close to the east side of the Weather Bureau building; also the location of the Weather Bureau building, if left at its present site, will not harmonize and be appropriate in the architectural and landscape plans of the Michigan Agricultural College. Finally, it is believed and represented that sooner or later—undoubtedly within a few years—strong objection will be made to the continued location of the Weather Bureau building at its present site and efforts made to have same moved. Therefore the college and State authorities believe that the expenditure by the State highway department at the present time of a considerable sum of money—twelve to fifteen thousand dollars—to do this will not be an economical and satisfactory expenditure of funds, but rather it would be more satisfactory and efficient and economical in the long run to utilize those funds at the present time toward the erection of another Weather Bureau building on a suitable site elsewhere on the Michigan Agricultural College campus.

This meets with the approval of the Weather Bureau, because it realizes the common sense business economy of such a plan, and furthermore, as it is believed that if utilization is made of the building on its new site it will not provide sufficient space for the present Weather Bureau activities. One of the problems which will exist will be the taking of pilot balloon observations, which are very important now in the aid of upper air investigations and forecasts in the aid of aviation. By reason of the close proximity to the roadway, above referred to, such observations will not be able to be taken near the building. All of this can be cured by the location of the Weather Bureau at another appropriate, suitable, and less public site in another portion of the grounds.

The bill reported herewith authorizes the deeding by the Government to the State board of agriculture of its present site and building, in consideration for which the State board will deed, in fee simple, to the United States another suitable site of similar or larger size, and will pay to the United States \$10,000; furthermore, the State highway department, in consideration of being relieved from the terms of its agreement with the Secretary of Agriculture, above referred to, and in lieu of the payment of twelve to fifteen thousand dollars, which would be required of it under such agreement, and in harmony and consideration of the plan referred to, will pay to the Government \$15,000.

These two amounts, totaling \$25,000, will not be sufficient to construct on the site to be provided by the State board of agriculture a building of suitable size, similar or comparable with the present building. Therefore, it is proposed to have the Government appropriate, in effect, the additional \$10,000 required, and to have authorized the erection of a building at a cost not to exceed \$35,000.

There is printed as follows letters in reference to the matter:

WEATHER BUREAU,
Washington, February 4, 1925.

HON. GRANT M. HUDSON,
House of Representatives.

DEAR MR. HUDSON: Referring to your several conferences with me concerning the adjustment of matters relating to the Weather Bureau station at East Lansing, Mich., and especially your telephone request for a written memorandum concerning the same, I am submitting herewith copy of statement giving in full the history of the Weather Bureau building at Lansing and the conditions incident to the extension of the State boulevard across the grounds, which make it extremely desirable to accept the generous propositions of the State and the State board of agriculture to relocate the Weather Bureau building in accordance with terms proposed.

According to previous representations, the Michigan State Board of Agriculture desires to have the Weather Bureau building removed from its present location, where it would hereafter interfere with the general architectural effects of the university grounds after the completion of the new boulevard and the new entrance to the university, to another site which the university is willing to grant to the Government in exchange for the present site and to also contribute an amount of \$10,000 toward the construction of a new building. Also, the Michigan State highway department offers to pay to the United States the sum of \$15,000 in lieu of carrying into effect the agreement of the State highway department to move and relocate the present Weather Bureau building without expense to the Federal Government, as set forth in the permit given by the Secretary of Agriculture under date of August 6, 1924, to the State highway department to cross the land owned by the Federal Government on which is located the present Weather Bureau building, under Michigan Federal aid project No. 88 C 2.

It is recognized that the \$25,000 received by the United States, as noted above, will not meet the cost of a new Weather Bureau building, and that about \$10,000 extra will have to be appropriated for that purpose. The Weather Bureau believes that the total cost for the new building will be \$35,000, with an additional amount of about \$3,000 required to take care of the additional cost of building and extending steam conduit, etc., to the new building, in connection with a centralized heating plant of the college.

In presenting these matters to you in this manner I wish to say that the subject was discussed in conference with the budget officer of the department, and I am authorized to say that, with reference to any additional appropriations necessary to provide for Weather Bureau activities at Lansing, if the Committee on Agriculture so desires and requests, the department will submit a report on proposed legislation through the usual channels, with the object of ascertaining whether or not the project may be in accordance with the financial program of the President and the Bureau of the Budget.

Respectfully,

C. F. MARVIN, *Chief of Bureau.*

MICHIGAN STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT,

Lansing, July 22, 1924.

Hon. HENRY WALLACE,

Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: Attached hereto you will find plans of the Federal-aid project known as No. 88 C 2 lying on the south corporation line of the city of East Lansing.

This project is on the so-called Detroit-Grand Haven highway, which is a part of the primary Federal-aid system for this State. You will note from the plans attached that a boulevard system is proposed and everything is in shape to proceed for making formal application to the Bureau of Public Roads, with the exception that we must cross a parcel of land belonging to the Federal Government on which is located a United States Weather Bureau building.

The matter of getting across the Government property was taken up with Mr. C. F. Marvin, Chief of the United States Weather Bureau, at his office in Washington, July 10. Mr. H. H. Halladay, secretary of the Michigan Agricultural College, and Mr. D. A. Seeley, meteorologist, stationed at East Lansing conferred with Mr. Marvin at the same time, inasmuch as the south strip of the pavement on this proposed project lies entirely on Michigan Agricultural College grounds, with exception of the short distance where we propose crossing the Government property.

Before taking this matter up with Mr. Marvin it was taken up with the Bureau of Public Roads through Mr. J. T. Voshell, district engineer at Chicago, and also Mr. T. H. MacDonald, Chief of the Bureau of Public Roads at Washington, and with Mr. P. St. J. Wilson, chief engineer of the bureau, and they are familiar with the project and are ready to approve of the project as soon as right of way is acquired across the Federal bureau property. We are therefore at this time making application under section 17 of the Federal act (42 Stat. 212) for permit to cross the north side of the United States Weather Bureau property, as shown by detailed plan, tracing being forwarded in duplicate.

We deem this a necessary improvement and it is the only possible solution of a traffic situation that must be met on this part of the primary Federal-aid system. In requesting the permit or transfer of land to the State highway department we agree to relocate the present Weather Bureau Building on the Government reservation such that the Weather Bureau work can be consistently continued and that the cost of moving and relocating the building and other necessary expenses incident thereto shall be met without expense to the Weather Bureau or the United States Government. It is understood that to fully meet the needs of the Weather Bureau it will be necessary to excavate and construct on another portion of the property a cellar and foundation walls and to move to such new location the present Weather Bureau Building, turning it at an angle of approximately 90°, so that the present office or west entrance will face north and the present north or residence entrance will face east on the proposed new boulevard entrance to the campus of the Michigan Agricultural College.

It is also understood that necessary approaches and walks will be made without cost to the Weather Bureau. It is understood that as a result of the conference held at Washington with the Chief of the Weather Bureau that there

will be made available by proper grading and landscaping sufficient surrounding or near-by space to the west and south of the present Weather Bureau property to be utilized for necessary and proper exposure of Weather Bureau meteorological instruments. We further agree to place the Weather Bureau Building in as good condition in the new location as before moving.

There is an immediate necessity for prompt consideration of this matter and we trust that the necessary authorization for us to proceed under the above-named terms will be forthcoming.

Very truly yours,

G. C. DILLMAN,
Deputy Commissioner, Chief Engineer.

AUGUST 6, 1924.

Mr. G. C. DILLMAN,
*Deputy Commissioner, Chief Engineer,
State Highway Department, Lansing, Mich.*

DEAR MR. DILLMAN: Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of July 22, which was accompanied by a copy of the plans and profile for that portion of Michigan Federal-aid project No. 88 C 2 which lies on the south corporate line of the city of East Lansing across the parcel of land belonging to the Federal Government on which is located the United States Weather Bureau Building. There also accompanied your letter duplicate linen tracings and two blue prints therefrom showing the existing conditions and proposed construction.

For the purpose of getting across the parcel of land which is owned by the Federal Government and occupied by the Weather Bureau Building, you make application under section 17 of the Federal highway act (42 Stat. 212) for the appropriation and transfer to the State highway department of a strip of said parcel of land on the north side thereof as shown on the detailed plan and profile and the linen tracings which accompanied your letter. This application is made in line with previous correspondence of this subject, and pursuant to suggestions made at conferences of July 9 and 10 between yourself, Mr. H. H. Halladay, secretary of the Michigan Agricultural College, Mr. D. A. Seeley, meteorologist, stationed at East Lansing, and Washington officials of the Bureau of Public Roads and of the Weather Bureau.

It is noted that you state that the improvement in connection with which the permit to cross the property of the Federal Government is desired is very necessary and the only possible solution of a traffic situation that must be met on that part of the primary system of Federal aid highways of the State. It is noted also that in making request for the strip of land in question you state that the highway department agrees, without expense to the Federal Government, to excavate and construct on another portion of said parcel of land a cellar and foundation walls and move and relocate and reestablish thereon as indicated on the linen tracings which accompanied your letter and in as good condition as it now is, the present Weather Bureau building, turning the building at an angle approximately 90° so that the present office of west entrance will face north and the present north or residence entrance will face east on the proposed new boulevard entrance to the campus of the Michigan Agricultural College. You state further that without expense to the Federal Government necessary approaches and walks will be constructed and there will be made available by proper grading and landscaping sufficient surrounding or near-by space to the west and south of the present Weather Bureau property to be utilized for necessary and proper exposure of the meteorological instruments of said bureau. It is understood, and you so state, that the highway department agrees that all of the foregoing will be carried out in full, so that the Weather Bureau building will be in as good condition when relocated and reestablished in the new location as it is in its present location and will fully meet the needs of that bureau, all of which it is fully understood and agreed will be accomplished without expense to the Federal Government.

In view of the representations made by the Michigan State highway department, particularly as embodied in your letter of July 22 and its inclosures, and, further, in view of information which has come to this department from other sources, I find that the transfer and appropriation of the strip of land in question is reasonably necessary for a right of way where the proposed improvements, known and referred to in your letter of July 22, and in the plan and profile and linen tracings which accompanied same, as Michigan Federal aid project No. 88 C 2 could cross the land owned by the Federal Government and on which is located the

United States Weather Bureau building at East Lansing, Mich. Such land, therefore, is hereby transferred and appropriated to the Michigan State highway department for the purpose set forth, subject to the conditions recited above as to removing, relocating, and reestablishing the Weather Bureau building.

There is returned herewith one of the linen tracings which accompanied your letter. The other copy of the tracing is retained for the files of this department. These tracings have been revised by adding a notation of approval thereon, which has been signed by me.

Sincerely,

HENRY C. WALLACE, *Secretary.*

